

center infrastructure, with no assurances that people with disabilities or other target populations would continue to benefit from the funds. One-stop centers, while effective in certain populations, are not programmatically—or in many cases, physically—accessible for people with disabilities.

In this time of state budget constraints, 37 state VR agencies are operating under such limited resources that they have instituted an “order of selection” policy, serving people with the most severe disabilities first. They are being forced to leave behind increasing numbers of eligible individuals who want to work. H.R. 1261 would exacerbate this situation, by taking funds from the successful VR programs to fund programs that cannot reach their target population. In light of the unemployment crisis faced by our Nation and staggering 70 percent unemployment rate in the disability community, it is critical that we preserve the funding stream for VR programs.

Please vote against H.R. 1261.

HONORING DR. JANIS LYNN
PAUSHTER UPON HER RETIRE-
MENT

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 9, 2003

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a proud supporter of the excellent Fairfax County, Virginia, Public School System to recognize one of its shining lights. Dr. Janis Lynn Paushter, a 26-year contributor to our nationally recognized school system and principal of Fairhill Elementary School since 1991, is retiring at the end of this year's term.

The common sentiment of parents, teachers and students at Fairhill School on learning of her decision to retire is disappointment. Dr. Paushter is loved and respected throughout the Fairhill community for her leadership qualities, her excellence as a role model, her talents as a fair and trusted administrator and her genuine love for her students, associates and her position.

Dr. Paushter earned her Bachelor of Arts degree from Syracuse University, her Master's degree from Columbia University, and conducted additional post-graduate studies at George Mason University. She has been honored with numerous educational awards and has been invited to lecture on educational matters at Oxford University in England, Korea, and China.

Later this year, she will be relocating to Florida to establish a horse ranch with help from her two Jack Russell terriers and her German shepherd. Thanks to her talents as a mentor, her shining light will not be extinguished as she leaves, but illuminated more brightly through her associates and students.

I ask her colleagues to join me today in recognizing and commending Dr. Janis Paushter for her untiring support of thousands of Fairfax County students and in thanking her for all she has accomplished for education during her illustrious career.

WORKFORCE REINVESTMENT AND ADULT EDUCATION ACT OF 2003

SPEECH OF

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2003

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1261) to enhance the workforce investment system of the Nation by strengthening one-stop career centers; providing for more effective governance arrangements, promoting access to a more comprehensive array of employment, training, and related services, establishing a targeted approach to serving youth, and improving performance accountability, and for other purposes:

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to urge all of my colleagues to vote against H.R. 1261, the Workforce Investment and Adult Education Act (WIA). WIA authorizes and funds employment, training, literacy, and vocational rehabilitation programs for adults and dislocated workers, as well as activities for disadvantaged and low-income youth.

I have numerous concerns with the legislation before this House. However, I want to briefly discuss just two of the reasons that make this bill flawed.

H.R. 1261 would jeopardize the quality of training provided to workers. This bill fails to help the thousands of Americans who are looking for work or in need of additional job training. H.R. 1261 takes away dedicated funding for vulnerable workers by consolidating funding for Employment Services and service to adults and dislocated workers into block grants. Mr. Speaker, given that unemployment numbers for the month of April rose to 6 percent, a four-month high, it does not make sense that this vital program would lose funding.

But most troubling is the fact that H.R. 1261 would permit faith-based organizations that receive WIA funds to hire or fire employees based on religion. This reverses the federal government's stance of fighting against federally-funded discrimination by exempting religious organizations from anti-discrimination requirements. It also reverses the policy that until now has been supported on a bipartisan basis—because it is the only right and sensible policy. It is the only true American policy.

I ask my colleagues to reject this bill. Provisions in H.R. 1261 would undermine programs designed to aid dislocated workers and public policy aimed at protecting workers from discrimination. American workers need and deserve better.

WORKFORCE REINVESTMENT AND ADULT EDUCATION ACT OF 2003

SPEECH OF

HON. TAMMY BALDWIN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2003

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1261) to enhance the workforce investment system of the Nation by strengthening one-stop career centers, providing for more effective governance

arrangements, promoting access to a more comprehensive array of employment, training, and related services, establishing a targeted approach to serving youth, and improving performance accountability, and for other purposes:

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Chairman, last week, the Bureau of Labor Statistics announced that the unemployment rate rose to 6 percent. In my home state of Wisconsin, we had the fourth highest number of massive layoffs in the country behind much larger states like California and Texas. Sadly, it seems like many here in Washington have gotten used to these grim statistics; after all, under the economic stewardship of President Bush we've lost close to more than 2.7 million jobs since he took office. We have been losing 73,000 jobs a month, which accounts for President Bush having the worst jobs creation record of any President in U.S. history.

We can't count on the stewardship of the Bush administration to get America back to work. It has become clear that this Congress needs to step up and put the task squarely upon its shoulders. This week we have a chance to do this as we take up the reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and the proposed tax cut. Both of these bills are important in how we not only help people find and maintain jobs, but how we will create new ones. However, I believe we may miss our opportunity to accomplish these goals unless both bills are torn up and rewritten. Today, I would like to specifically talk about the WIA.

The WIA was signed into law in 1998 with the intent of cementing the Federal government's commitment in helping states improve their employment, training, literacy, and vocational rehabilitation programs. Before the act was signed into law, states had a fragmented and duplicative number of programs that were meant to help prepare workers for jobs and to assist them in their searches.

Since its inception, thousands of displaced workers, veterans, and young adults have taken part in—and relied on—programs implemented by the WIA. The “one-stop” system created by WIA has provided them with consolidated services, such as job retraining classes, to get them out of unemployment lines and back onto the payrolls. Title II of the Act has played a critical role in helping adults with low-literacy, basic skill levels and limited English proficiency, by providing them with the training, tools and skills necessary to compete in today's knowledge-driven workforce.

The bill before us today takes the progress made over the last four years and stops it in its tracks. The WIA was custom designed to be effective in an economic downturn like the one we are experiencing now. American workers need the WIA strengthened, not scaled back, but that's exactly what the House Republicans want to do.

Those who have are unemployed will run out of unemployment insurance benefits in 23 days. The last time we extended unemployment benefits was shortly after Christmas and the holidays—when many people had already run out of benefits. For many families, the restoration of benefits was too little, too late. By not including the extension of unemployment benefits in this bill, we will in all likelihood delay helping workers who need it most. Not only does this diminish the original intent of this legislation, but it's also a slap in the face